

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE****In the Claims:**

Claims 6, 12, 15 and 17 were amended as follows:

6. (Amended) A magneto-optical recording medium as set forth in any one of claims 3 [to 5,] or 4, wherein a thickness of the mask layer is in the range of 3 to 67 % of a thickness of the reproduction layer.

12. (Amended) A magneto-optical recording medium as set forth in claim [1,] 11, wherein the mask layer is made of GdFeCo in which Gd is contained in the range of 26 to 30 atom% and Co is contained in the range of 20 to 30 atom%.

15. (Amended) A magneto-optical recording medium as set forth in any one of claims 11 [to 14,] or 12, further comprising a magnetic layer which has a direction of easy magnetization extending in an in-plane direction at room temperature and is exchanged-coupled to the mask layer.

17. (Amended) A magneto-optical recording medium as set forth in any one of claims 11 [to 16,] or 12, wherein three magnetic layers including the mask layer, the reproduction layer and the intermediate layer each contain Gd.